

PREFACE

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The University of Palermo (Laboratory of Biology and Biotechnology for Cultural Heritage, Dep. STEBICEF – Botany and Plant Ecology section) and the Italian Association of Archaeometry (*Associazione Italiana di Archaeometria – AIAr*) with the tangible support of Bionat-Italia srl, organized the *Second Conference on Biology and Archaeobiology – from Knowledge to Preventive Conservation*. This Conference should be regarded as a continuation of the previous *First Conference on Biological Systems and Cultural Heritage* (6-7 October 2009). Both meetings were held in the splendid setting of Palermo Botanical Gardens, with the participation of researchers, scholars, restorers, experts and those working in the field of conservation and restoration of cultural and natural heritage from all over Italy.

The aim was to activate and strengthen scientific and technological relations between different professionals, in order to define innovative interdisciplinary procedures in full compliance with modern standards of maintenance and restoration.

Considering that research in Biology and Biotechnology has provided valuable support for integrated interventions in the field of conservation of cultural heritage, landscape and archaeological remains, the conference included thematic sessions concerning: archaeobiology (human, animal, vegetal remains); monitoring for the characterization of biological systems able to induce biodeterioration of several (organic, inorganic) constitutive materials; interactions between works of art and the environments in which they are preserved; innovative technologies to control microbial biodeterioration and for sustainable restoration procedures.

The contributions (oral, poster) presented, emphasized the need for an interdisciplinary scientific approach and integrated scientific skills focused on addressing the different aspects of conservation interventions and the fruition of Cultural Heritage, keeping in mind the potential to develop “green strategies”.

The opportunity to publish, in a special issue of the international Journal of Conservation Science in Cultural Heritage, a number of contributions selected by a scientific committee, represents an excellent way to promote and spread the activities of Italian research groups in the field of sustainable conservation, restoration and use of cultural and natural heritage.